

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 5, 12, 13, and 21 were previously canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein.

Claims 1, 2, 8, 18, 20, and 24 are amended. No new matter is added.

Claims 1-4, 6-11, 14-20, and 22-24 are currently pending.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3, 8-9, 18-19, and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,419,579 to Bennett et al. ("Bennett") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,942,572 to Inoue ("Inoue"), and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,311,976 to Yoseloff et al. ("Yoseloff"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claims 4, 6, 10, 11, 20, and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Bennett in view of Inoue, in further view of Yoseloff, and in yet further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,837,790 to Kaminkow ("Kaminkow"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claims 7, 14-15, 17, and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Bennett in view of Inoue, in further view of Yoseloff, and in yet further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,205,555 to Hamano ("Hamano"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claim 16 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Bennett in view of Inoue, in further view of Yoseloff, in further view of Kaminkow, and in yet further in view of Hamano. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

With respect to independent claim 1, the Examiner contends that the combination of Bennett, Inoue, and Yoseloff discloses all of the elements of claim 1. However, claim 1 is amended to include the limitation:

a display mechanism that vibrates in said display module, to thereby visually differentiate, at least one of:
multiple winning arrangements of symbols by which multiple wins are established; and
multiple win lines related to said multiple winning arrangements of said symbols by which said multiple wins are established.

Support for this amendment can be found, for example, in Page 4, Lines 3-7 and Page 14, Line 24-Page 15, Line 2 of the Specification.

According to the Examiner, Kaminkow “teaches the inclusion of a vibration feature in an electronic wager game wherein the feature is further taught by Kaminkow as being readily adaptable to a plurality [of] game trigger events.” (Detailed Action, Page 5). However, Kaminkow does not disclose a display mechanism that uses vibration to visually differentiate as required by amended claim 1.

Kaminkow discloses only that the either the entire display can be moved, or images on the display can be changed to simulate movement on the display. (Kaminkow, Column 2, Lines 17-29; Column 5, Lines 25-32) Kaminkow discloses that the simulated movement “enhances the enjoyment and entertainment which players experience.” (Kaminkow, Abstract).

In contrast, the vibration required by amended claim 1 has a functional purpose. The vibration is used to assist a user in differentiating between winning and non-winning arrangements of symbols. (Specification, Page 3, Line 24 – Page 4, Line 7). Although Kaminkow does disclose that the entire screen can be “shaken” (Kaminkow, Column 2, Lines 17-29), shaking the entire display screen would not, as required by amended claim 1, visually differentiate winning symbols. Instead, the shaking the entire screen would make it more difficult for a user to view the screen and

to thereby determine which symbols are the winning symbols. Therefore, the combination of Bennett, Inoue, Yoseloff, and Kaminkow does not disclose all of the elements of amended claim 1. Thus, amended claim 1 is not obvious in view of the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Independent claims 2, 8, 18, and 24 are amended to require that the display mechanism vibrates either the symbols that are arranged to establish multiple wins which share at least one common wild symbol or win lines associated with these symbols to thereby differentiate the winning symbols. Therefore, Applicants submit that claims 2, 8, 18, and 24 are allowable at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants request that these rejections be withdrawn.

Further, with respect to claim 6, the Examiner contends that claim 6 is obvious in view of the combination of Bennett, Inoue, Yoseloff, and Kaminkow. (Detailed Action, Pages 4-5). However, the Examiner fails to consider that claim 6 requires that "said display mechanism displays said wild symbol in one of said display areas of said display module in a static display, while said symbols in other said display areas of said display module are in a changing display." This limitation is directed to an aspect of the invention wherein the wild symbol that affects the common winning line stops moving while the other symbols keep moving. Applicants submit that the combination of references cited by the Examiner does not disclose this limitation. Thus, Applicants submit that claim 6, in addition to being allowable for reasons of dependency on an allowable base claim, is independently patentable. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

In light of the foregoing remarks and amendments, Applicants submit that the cited references fail to disclose, teach, or suggest the features of independent claims 1, 2, 8, 18, and 24. Applicants further submit that claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 9-11, 14-17, 19, 20 and 22-23, which are dependent upon one of claims 1, 2, 8, 18, and 24, are allowable at least by reason of dependency upon an allowable base claim. Consequently, Applicants submit that the present invention is both novel and inventive over the cited references and respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above remarks and amendments, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below if the Examiner believes any issue can be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment.

It is believed that no fee is required for these submissions. Should the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determine that additional fees are owed or that any refund is owed for this application, the Commissioner is hereby authorized and requested to charge the required fee(s) and/or credit the refund(s) owed to our Deposit Account No. 04-0100.

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Respectfully submitted,

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